



State of Rhode Island  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminister Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 6b  
August 17, 2021

Angélica Infante-Green  
Commissioner

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**TO:** Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

**FROM:** Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner *A. Infante-Green*

**RE:** **Approval of the Commissioner's Recommendation to Deny the Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy's Request for Major Charter Amendment**

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Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy (Nowell) is a statewide independent charter public school located in Providence. Nowell's mission is "to ensure that Rhode Island's pregnant, parenting, and underserved youth graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for success in college, career and family life." The school opened in 2013 and currently serves 160 students in grade nine through grade twelve. The school is authorized to enroll up to 320 students statewide with 160 students at their Providence campus, 80 students at their proposed East Providence campus, and 80 students at their proposed Warwick campus. The majority of the school's students reside in Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls. 95.2% of students are identified as economically disadvantaged, 31.9% of students are multilingual learners, and 20% of students are on an Individualized Learning Plan (IEP).

In 2018-19, the school earned a one-star designation, and was identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement in 2018-19 due to low Achievement and Growth, and low Graduation Rate. Nowell was granted a two-year extension to their charter in Fall 2020. Previously, the school was granted a three-year renewal term in Fall 2017. The school will go through the renewal process in Fall 2022.

Amendment Request

Nowell has submitted a major amendment to their charter proposing to consolidate the unused seats at the East Providence and Warwick campuses to increase the number of students served, to 320, at their Providence campus.

Nowell has requested to serve:

- 180 students statewide at their Providence campus during the 2021-22 school year.
- 220 students statewide at their Providence campus during the 2022-23 school year.
- 280 students statewide at their Providence campus during the 2023-24 school year.
- 320 students statewide at their Providence campus during the 2024-25 school year.

In accordance with 2.3.1.A of the Council's Regulations Governing Rhode Island Public Charter Schools, such major changes in the school's operations require the action of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education.

**RECOMMENDATION: THAT, the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education moves to reject the amendment request by the Sheila C. "Skip" Nowell Leadership Academy that would permit the school to serve 320 students, at their Providence campus.**